

# FEBRUARY 2008

Welcome to 2008, we hope that this year will be a fruitful year for you all.

Our first newsletter for this year covers the following:

1. Information on our website, particularly focusing on our forums
2. New Zealand Legislation Website
3. Lifetime Design
4. Standard for Swimming Pool Design draft Standard DZ4441
5. Riverton Viewing Platform

The BFT are always interested on hearing your comments relating to accessibility, so please don't hesitate to [contact us](#).

## 1. **Website**

Here is a quick update on our website, with particular focus on our forum that is all ready to get up and running.

### **Overview**

Our new website was launched at the end of October 2007. The feedback we have received on this live website has been outstanding.

Some features that can be used:

- Registering online for a seminar.
- Ordering the Resource Handbook.
- Asking for technical advice through our forums, or by contacting either the office or a local Barrier Free Advisor (BFA).
- Finding relevant information relating to Barrier Free Access.
- Signing up to receive our Barrier Free Newsletter.

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

This is a list of our [frequently asked questions](#). If you do not find your question here, or would like further information on our recommendations, please post a question on our forum.

### **Website Forum**

[Join the forum](#) to keep yourself updated with current accessibility issues; use as a first point of call to answer any technical questions that you have; and post any community announcements that members might be interested in.

### General Chat

Post an announcement, discuss a documentary seen on television, or start a poll. You can now discuss general issues relating to Barrier Free access with other members of our general chat forum.

### Technical Advice

Any technical questions relating to Barrier Free Access can now be posted online at our technical advice forum. This forum is closely monitored by the Barrier Free office and the reply will come from either the Barrier Free Trust or a qualified Barrier Free Advisor. Before posting a question online, please check our Frequently Asked Questions page to ensure that it hasn't been answered already.

### Friends of Barrier Free NZ

If you have any community events or notices that you think other members might be interested in, post it at the Friends of Barrier Free NZ forum.

## **2. New Zealand Legislation Website**

If you are interested in locating up-to-date versions of the Acts of Parliament; Regulations; Bills; and supplementary order papers, then head to the [NZ Legislation website](#).

This website has simple search features to navigate around. For example, you can type in the quick search 'access for people with disabilities' and you will find the relevant documentation. Once an Act has been opened, the keywords are highlighted to save you from wading through pages of information.

## **3. Lifetime Design**

Lifetime Design Foundation is a government funded organisation that will raise awareness of the benefits of housing accessibility and practical design solutions to achieve this. Their principles focus on the need for places and products to be 'fit' for people, rather than the current practice that require people to 'fit' the place or product. Check out their website at <http://lifetimedesign.co.nz>.

## **4. Standard for Swimming Pool Design draft Standard DZ4441**

This new draft was released for public comment which will supersede NZS 4441:1985. This proposed document does not have any reference or mention with regards to disabled access. One of our trustees, Vivian Naylor, has put in a submission on inclusive design and modes of pool entry, so we are looking forward to hearing the progress on this draft.

## **5. Riverton Viewing Platform**

It was brought to our attention that the Riverton Viewing Platform in the South Island was not complying on a number of features: signage; ramp gradient and handrails; the stairs and the stair handrails; and access to the viewing platform. After much correspondence between our Barrier Free Advisors' and the Southland District Council we have managed to improve accessibility on all features but the viewing platform.

The response back to us regarding the viewing platform was that the SDC believe the provisions in the Building Regulations are being met for the intended purpose of the structure in that wheelchair users are not visually disadvantaged by having access to level approximately 450mm from the highest platform.

This case is interesting as it is a perfect example of a problem that could have been prevented had it been picked up at the consent level. It is great to see a remarkable increase of Council employees registering into our Barrier Free Seminars as awareness of accessibility in the early stages of the building process can save unnecessary delays and costs in the long run.